

XXVIII.—*A new Agouti from the Moon Mountains, Southern British Guiana, with Notes on other Species.* By OLD-FIELD THOMAS.

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THE agouti of the Moon Mountains, Southern British Guiana, seems to represent a new subspecies of *D. aguti*, L., a name under which I propose to place all the orange-rumped agoutis with the exception of the small insular *D. rubrata* of Trinidad.

The members of this group from the coast-region of North-eastern Venezuela and Northern Guiana are probably all referable to a single form, ranging from Cumana to Cayenne. The earliest name for them is *D. a. flavescens*, Thos., the later names *lucifer* and *cayennæ* being probably due to the great variation which our now considerable series from Demerara shows the animal to be liable to. Normal specimens from this area are dark-coloured, with blackish nape and darkened withers, the yellowish of the rump dark fulvous, and the under surface brown, with but little mesial lightening; the feet usually black. In individual specimens, however, all parts, and especially the rump, may be very much lighter.

In Brazil, on the other hand, the true *D. aguti* is always much lighter, the nape and withers without blackening, the under surface with a broad and distinct mesial line of white or yellow running its whole length from chest to inguinal region, the feet more or less grizzled with orange.

But from the Moon Mountains a series of specimens differ from both, and may be described as

*Dasyprocta aguti lunaris*, subsp. n.

Nape and fore back grizzled olivaceous grey, without any blackening. Rump ochraceous orange, generally darkened by inconspicuous blackish subterminal bands on the hairs—the colour fairly uniform in the series available. Flanks, sides of rump, and legs grizzled olivaceous, the orange not extending downwards on to them. Under surface scarcely lighter than sides, without median light stripe on chest, though there is generally an irregular whitish lightening on the belly and inguinal region. Hands brown, blackish, or grizzled. Feet grizzled olivaceous, only darkening to blackish terminally.

Dimensions of the type (measured on a well-made skin) :—  
Head and body 510 mm.; hind foot 103; ear 40.

Skull: greatest length 110; condylo-incisive length 95; zygomatic breadth 49; nasals 37.5; interorbital breadth 29.5; palatilar length 42; upper tooth-series ( $p^4$  in use and worn) 18.2.

*Hab.* Moon Mountains, Southern British Guiana, about 1° N., 59° W. Other specimens, apparently referable to the same form, from the Lower Rio Yamunda and from the Upper Caura River, Orinoco.

*Type.* Adult female. B.M. no. 11. 6. 7. 43. Original number 9 a. Presented by the late Mr. F. V. McConnell. Seven specimens.

This subspecies differs from true *D. aguti* by the absence of a mesial light stripe running down the chest and abdomen, from *croconota* by the non-extension of the orange rump-colour on to the sides of the hips and down the legs, and from the agouti of Northern British Guiana by its lighter general colour, and especially its lighter fore back, without blackening on nape and withers, and its less blackened feet. A baby specimen, however, has both the darkened fore back and blackish feet of the more northern form, which appears to indicate either variability or change with age. But, as Mr. McConnell's specimens were obtained by a native collector, and the localities were sometimes misstated, it is just possible that this young specimen was not from the Moon Mountains at all, but came from Demerara, where the same collector obtained a number of *D. a. flavescens*.

In a recent paper Dr. Allen\* rather unaccountably (unless he has been solely influenced by the reputed locality "Guiana") considers that the Guianan yellow-rumped agoutis should bear the name of *D. croconota prymnolopha*, as based on Wagler's *D. prymnolopha*†; but the latter is at once distinguishable from all the *aguti* group by the black on the centre of the rump, and it was no doubt quite erroneously stated to be from Guiana, its true locality being Brazil—from Para to Bahia.

In this connection I may note that three agoutis from Lamarao, Bahia, collected by A. Robert, clearly represent Osgood's *D. nigrilunis*‡; but they differ so widely among

\* Bull. Ann. Mus. xxxiv. p. 629 (1915).

† 'Isis,' 1831, p. 619.

‡ Field Mus. Publ. x. p. 192 (1915).

themselves in the degree to which the yellow of the sides of the rump is grizzled or clear, that, with this character shown to be variable, I very much doubt if *nigriclunis* should be considered as distinct from *prymnolopha*, to which these specimens have hitherto been referred.

Dr. Allen \* has also recently tried to show that *Myoprocta pratti*, Pocock, is synonymous with *Dasyprocta exilis*, Wagl., from the Amazon, which has usually been synonymized with *M. acouchy*.

But how he can deduce that "*D. exilis* belongs evidently to the olivaceous and not to the rufous section of the genus" from Wagler's words "notæo toto castaneo-fuscescente" I am at a loss to understand. And the rest of Wagler's description equally applies to *M. acouchy*, with the quite unimportant exception of the median white stripe on the belly.

The British Museum contains a *Myoprocta* from Obidos which is no doubt representative of *D. exilis*, and this is in all respects similar to typical *M. acouchy* of Guiana.

The relation of Allen's *M. milleri*, from Colombia, to Pocock's Amazonian *M. pratti* still remains to be settled.

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#### XXIX.—A new Mink-like Mustela from Java.

By H. C. ROBINSON and OLDFIELD THOMAS.

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THE animal here described was obtained during 1916 in Java by Robinson, and forms a very striking addition to the fauna of that island. It is widely different from any known Oriental *Mustela*, but has a very remarkable resemblance to a mink, especially to the European one (*Mustela lutreola*), on which fact we have based its name.

#### *Mustela lutreolina*, sp. n.

*Type*.—Adult male (skin and skull). Formerly Federated Malay States Museums, no. 190/16; now British Museum, no. 17. 8. 4. 2. Collected at Tjibodas, West Java, 5500', on February 17th, 1916, by H. C. Robinson. Original number 7231.

*Characters*.—A large-sized species of the subgenus *Mustela*,

\* *Op. cit.* xxxv. p. 569.